



Fireball!

USS OZBOURN (DD846)

Editor: Bob Whitten
1117 Yorkshire Drive
Cupertino, CA 95014, Tel 408/252-9213

Vol. 2, No. 1
January 1993

Editor's Remarks

More replies from shipmates have come in since the last issue of Fireball! We now have almost ninety on the mailing list. See below for an update on the planned reunion.

As in preceding quarters, I have received stories, newspaper clippings, material from the commissioning, excerpts from cruise books, etc. for use in the newsletter. Captain Denham, USN-Ret., who was CO from 1966 to 1968 sent a cruise book from that period. It is particularly interesting because of the photos of the damage done by North Vietnamese shore batteries. This was the second occasion in which 'OZ' was hit by shore gunfire; She was also hit by two 75mm. shells while anchored in Wonsan harbor, North Korea. Then-Ensign Charlie Jarrett tells me that he still has the piece of the projectile that lodged in his battle station (Mark 56 director) a few seconds before he arrived!

Since the last newsletter I have had the pleasure of a brief trip to Moscow. My, how the place has changed in the 22 years since Sally and I were there last. All sense of repression is -- GONE!! And the women! No more roley-poley potato diet lassies. They, at least the young ones (and some middle age too) have learned to diet, use cosmetics, wear western style clothing and fix their hair in western styles. For the young bucks: Go East!!

On the first day there, I had the unusual experience with discussing with Peoples Deputy, Fr. Gleb Yakunin (until "glasnost" a political prisoner in Siberia) and two Russian Army colonels how to establish a *Chaplain Corps*. If someone had told me five years ago that I would be sitting with a Russian Orthodox priest and two Russian Army colonels talking about how to adopt chaplains in the Russian army, I would have told them they were absolutely and positively batty!!

One of our shipmates, "Mhoire" G. McIntosh, emigrated to Australia in the early 1950's and has been a rancher there for many years. "A.C." O'Halloran writes that a number of names were

unaccountably omitted from the roster of plank-owners in the preceding issue. Those omitted are: L. A. Bernier, K. L. Davis, J. T. Johnson, E. R. Jury, N. R. Knox, M. R. Kroeger, E. E. Locke, A. C. O'Halloran, S. C. Pleasants, R. Rooney, F. Souza, and W. H. Wister. He also writes that another shipmate and plank-owner, Joe Montagno has been very ill. For those who wish to send him a note, his address is RR 12, The Woods, Marion, OH 43302.

May all of my 'OZ' shipmates have a joyous and prosperous New Year!

For the Scots among you -- *Slainté Bhor!*

Christmas Miracle

The following story was submitted by Shipmate Robert E. "Bobby" Lee. It took place just before Bobby reported for duty in "OZ" and so, strictly speaking, is not an OZBOURN story. Nevertheless, with the Christmas season just past, it seems appropriate. It was originally published in the Prattville Progress (circa 1988), Autauga County, Alabama where Bobby now lives. He is a retired forester (and a fellow Duke alumnus!).

Have you ever had to face spending Christmas away from home? The Navy had told us we'd be spending Christmas on the base. It was 1945. I had just turned 19 and was stationed at Newport, Rhode Island. In a few days I was to report for sea duty.

At morning muster on December 24, something changed. I was given a three day pass. It was limited to 200 miles off base.

I lived in North Carolina, nearly 700 miles away. How would I spend Christmas? I had no idea. One thing was sure, it wouldn't be on a Navy base.

Hurriedly, I packed and walked outside my barracks. A bus was loading for the Providence train station. I was the last person to squeeze on board.

In Providence, a train was about to pull out for New York. I had just enough time to buy a ticket and find a seat. It was as if a special star was guiding me.

Grand Central Station was a madhouse. Servicemen were everywhere. I hadn't been home in seven months, and I thought a glimpse of a train headed south might ease my homesickness. Out of curiosity, I found the gate from which the Silver Meteor departed. It was at the station! A long line of servicemen were waiting to board. Standing in line had become a way of life., so I took my place at the end. That train would be in Raleigh in less than 12 hours.

Before I knew it, I was looking at the conductor.

"Where's your ticket sailor?"

"I don't have one sir."

"Where do you want to go?"

"Raleigh, sir."

I'm sorry, son. This train has been booked for weeks. You need both a ticket and a reservation."

I turned to walk away. It had been foolish of me to get in line in the first place.

"Wait a second, mate. I'm from Raleigh too. I have an empty car going to Richmond. Take a seat there and wait for me. We'll get you home somehow."

Just before the train pulled out, the conductor came by and sold me a ticket. He told me my car would be loading in Richmond and when this happened I was to move to the club car.

We wished each other a Merry Christmas.

I was in the club car when the military police came through checking passes. The other servicemen had bulky furlough papers. I had a small card. The limitations were spelled out on the back in large letters.

I felt like a bank robber caught in the act. Visions of handcuffs and a Navy brig danced through my head.

The MP's were carefully examining the papers of others. When they got to me, I held up my ID card and the front of my pass. I forced a smile, prayed they wouldn't take my papers and wished them a Merry Christmas.

"Merry Christmas to you, sailor," one of them said as they moved on.

It was after midnight when we pulled into Raleigh. I realized it was already Christmas. I shared a cab to the bus station with a soldier. There was a wait for the *Trailways* bus, but I arrived in Durham before daylight.

When I got to my house, I stood in the cold for a moment thinking about how lucky I was. I noticed Mom had pasted a blue star on the living room window. It gave me a strange feeling to realize it was for me. Just inside the window, I could see a manger scene. I recalled having arranged it as a boy. Moving

closer, I could make out some glistening tinsel on our cedar Christmas tree. I was home!

When we gave thanks at dinner, we held hands a bit tighter than usual. For some reason, none of us wanted to let go.

Fourteen hours after arriving home, I was on a train headed north. My family had used some of the precious gas rationed to them to drive me to Raleigh. Somewhere between Richmond and Washington, I shared one of my wild turkey sandwiches with the serviceman seated next to me.

Life is a miracle. It is made possible because of Christmas -- the birthday of Jesus Christ. The spirit of Christmas goes beyond family and friends to include strangers.

Christmas is but one day of the year for celebrating miracles -- even personal ones involving homesick sailors.

Merry Christmas, friend.

* * * *

Update on Reunion

The reunion is scheduled for May 2nd to 5th at *The Sands Regency* in Reno. Provided we have enough interest, we will arrange a bus tour of Lake Tahoe, Virginia City and Carson City (Nevada capital), Harrah's Automobile Collection and a banquet. I provided cost estimates in the October issue. They are now firm and appear in the reservation form provided below. Make your reservations for everything but the hotel with me. But make your own reservations with The Sands using the form included in either this or the October issue. The cutoff date for sending your reservations is April 15th. (Something else is due on that date but I forget what it is!) For those shipmates age 62 or over, don't forget to enquire of the airlines about senior fares in order to get a good saving. They will not volunteer the information!

Please note that the business meeting is scheduled it is essential if we are to have future reunions. For those shipmates who have not yet sent me \$5 (some shipmates have sent more) please do so. Because we do not yet have enough funds to warrant a bank account, please write your checks to me. I will provide a full accounting of all funds at the reunion. In order to get an idea of how many we may expect as on summer 1992.

* * *

Books

Wm P. Mack, *South to Java, Pursuit of the Sea Wolf* and *Checkfire*, Nautical and Aviation Publishing Co.

Baltimore, MD are novels dealing with WW II "four-stackers" and based on VADM's Mack's experiences.

Press, Annapolis, MD; in press, spring 1993. Price: TBD.

Coming: *Sumner-Gearing Class Destroyers: Their Design, Weapons, and Equipment*, U.S. Naval Institute

Note to all recipients -- I will **NOT** send future issues to shipmates who have not responded form like that on page 2 above. If you have not done so, please take a moment to complete it and send back to me ASAP!!

Reply to Proposed Ship's Reunion - USS OZBOURN (DD846)
(for those shipmates who DID NOT reply to the questionnaires in vol 1, nos. 1,2 or 3)

Name _____ Wife's Name _____
Address _____ Telephone: _____
Street City State, Zip
Period served in OZBOURN (Mo./Y) _____ Billets(s) _____
Help in the planning/execution of the reunion? _____ If so, in what capacity? _____
Should we form an Association? Yes No
May we list your address, telephone no. and years of service on board OZBOURN in future newsletter
Yes No
Names/Addresses of shipmates not on the list: _____

Comments: _____

Please clip and return to Bob Whitten at your earliest convenience. Do NOT return if you have previously replied.

Replying Shipmates

Name	Years	Location
Akers, Charles O. (CO)	51-54	Arvada, CO
Aleander, Stephen R.	66-68	Olympia, WA
Athanas, Peter	46-48	Richland Center, WI
Badger, George	55-56	Alameda, CA
Barber, John	51-54	Fremont, CA
Berriman, Joseph (XO)	52-53	San Diego, CA
Brian, James W.	46-48	Antioch, CA
Burrows, George	46-48	Northport, FL
Bybee, Billy Baker	49-51	Houston, TX
Cole, Charles F. "Pete"	50-52	Columbus, OH
Cole, Lloyd J.	47-53	Coloma, WI
Connelly, Gene	46-47	Keansburg, NJ
Conwell, Fred R.	4850-52	Huntington Beach, CA
Courtney, Royce F.	56-57	Columbia, SC
Cressey, Wesley O.	58-62	Portland, ME
Denham, John G. (CO)	66-68	Walnut Creek, CA
Dolson, Frank J.	68-69	Stockbridge, MA
Fargo, William B. (CO)	52-54	Coronado, CA
Farquhar, Richard	56-58	Canal Winchester, OH
Flowers, Charles	59-63	Riverdale, GA
Hadley, John U.	50-51	Seattle, WA

Hanson, Jimmie O.	52-54	Bellingham, WA
Harris, Hiram G.	46-47	Gastonia, NC
Helland, James M.	46-46	Daphne, AL
Henderson, Keith A.	48-50	Trout Creek, MT
Holloway, Harry	48-52	Alamosa, CO
Ihme, Philip	46-48	Moncure, NC
Jackowski, John	60-62	Grand Rapids, MI
Jarrett, Charles B.	50-52	Pittsburgh, PA
Johnson, Harold D.	55-57	Conegrove, OK
Jones, David L.,	67-68	Bremerton, WA
Kamrath, William	64-68	Sublimity, OR
Kapocius, Algis	69-60	Greendale, WI
Kirby, Joseph	65-70	Lakeinthehills, IL
Koch, Alfred J.	47-51	Cheektawaga, NY
La Crosse, Dennis	63-70	Hansville, WA
La Fond, Richard	46-48	Suncook, NH 03275
Lee, Bobby	46-?	Pratville, AL 36067
Lofgren, Theodore T.	52-54	Poulsbo, WA
Logan, Paul G.	46-47	Braintree, MA
McIntosh, "Mhoire" G.	46-49	Gunurimba, Australia
Milas, Matthew	68-72	Lincoln, RI
Nixon, Paul E.	50-52	Torrance, CA
O'Halloran, A.C.	46-47	Ehrenberg, AZ
Ousey, Walter M. (XO)	50-51	Vallejo, CA
Palmer, H. Barr (XO)	50-52	Rancho Santa Fe, CA
Parker, Jeffrey W.	70-74	Upland, CA
Peich, Lester	52-?	San Diego
Pellizon, Frank	57-59	Bonita, CA
Perkins, Thomas M.	50-53	Port Orchard, WA
Planck, Richard	51-52	Omaha, NE
Pleasants, Stephen C.	46-48	Centreville, VA
Rigby, Bert	69-72	Conrad, MT
Rogers, Robert G.	50-51	Port Townsend, WA
Root, Daryle	59-63	Ladson, SC
Sedlacek, David	70-73	Columbus, NE
Sheldon, Warren R.	46-48	Akron, OH
Simon, Jerome "Abe"	50-52	Sierra Vista, AZ
Sommer, Robert F.	46-48	Augusta, NJ
Spittle, Frank	48-50	Laguna Hills, CA
Sturm, Herbert W.	60-64	Santa Paula, CA
Sundquist, Allen	72-75	Douglas, WY
Swigard, Philip	64-66	Kingston, WA
Tyree, Billy R.	52-53	Evansville, IN
Tyree, Jackson R.	52-55	Evansville, IN
Vorhees, Ferdinand F.	66-70	Lima, OH
Whitten, Robert C.	50-52	Cupertino, CA
Williamson, Monte	67-70	Rockville, IN
Williamson, Paul (XO)	64-66	Fairport, NY
Wood, Jim	71-73	Aurora, IL

* These are the shipmates who agreed to publication of addresses

For hotel registration, use the form below. Please submit direct to The Sands by April 15th, 1993.

For reunion registration, use the following form. Attendees please submit by April 15th, 1993.

USS OZBOURN (DD 846) Reunion Registration